

About Transportation.

EDITOR ADVOCATE:—Quoting from a plank in the People's party platform, "Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people." Party platforms are sign boards to guide public opinion in its travel, and mark the mile stones in a nation's progress. Industry is the basis and producer of all wealth, and the question is not how much wealth and prosperity have we as a nation or state, but how much is retained by the producer of it per individual. With facilities of exchange open to all industry alike in a productive nation such as ours, we will be the miracle of all present and past civilization. Our railways are the wonder and admiration of the world, and yet, as now operated, they are at war with Americanized independence in locating trade centers—in saying what tribute a community shall pay corporate right. They are to exchange what snobbery is to a republic—what flunkysm is to self respect. Corporate ownership of railways is from its very nature subversive to public equality of opportunity in labor and trade, because it naturally bases its charges for service on its power to exact as tribute "all the tariff will bear," which means the strong shall despoil the weak.

Notice the various devices of favoritism in classification, in commodity tariffs, and special rates, and so-called local rates based on double or more the through rate per ton per mile. The average citizen, regardless of political bias, should give this matter attention. We have no poet laureate in this country, but we have blatherskite laureates like Ingalls, Depew and Thurston, who paint on our minds a livid hue on the wealth of the nation, and our railway systems run by men whose text is, the "public be damned." The inter-state commerce facts show that the average haul, regardless of classification and distance, as in postal system, allowing the roads the same gross revenue as they now charge, was \$1.13 per ton. As a nation, we are delighted at the low rate we pay, but as an individual, if in Nebraska or Kansas, what do we pay? If at Kearney, Neb., we ship a ton of first-class goods from Chicago, the rate is \$27 against \$1.13. If at Hastings, a ton of groceries (not otherwise specified) to Alexandria, the charge is \$7.30 for the sixty mile haul. If to Alma from Hastings, where two competing (?) roads strive for business, it is \$9.40 a ton. A car of empty oil barrels from Kearney to Omaha costs \$15. A 30,000-pound car of canned goods, same haul, costs \$42. The same car, same weight, loaded with fourth-class goods, such as many kinds of groceries are classed at car lots, will be \$120. Groceries are used by the individual citizen, and scatter him into the ranks of the four political parties, and it is easy for the strong railway to despoil the weak citizen, which accounts for the high rates on that which all must buy. The man who sees no injustice in freight rates based on ton-per-mile rates, and those rates based on the whim of some traffic manager, is fit for serfdom, and gets what he deserves. Let us demand postal system of transit, distance and classification eliminated, the rate to be based on average cost of such service. The poet laureate of England is dead. Let us bury under a mountain of rates for the independent party the blatherskite laureates who are advocating or tolerating monarchy of railroads.

There is an association of Nebraska manufacturers advocating the patronage of home production. This is good. This should be done by us, but we should in-

sert a reciprocity clause demanding the advocacy of Iowa local rates for our side of the bargain. If my sight drives away the gloom from my neighbor, it shines none the less bright for me; but damn him who uses my light and refuses to let his shine my way. Republicanism in Nebraska and Kansas is Tammany tigerism of New York, and democracy here is its twin cub. The protection and reciprocity party of the west is the so-called "calamity howler" independent. Ben Harrison's white hat draped with a bloody shirt, nor Cleveland's alderman form draped with a free trade and force bill, cannot keep Nebraska's and Kansas' independence under old party rule.

A. J. GUSTIN.

Kearney, Neb., October 16, 1892.

The California Employers' Association Again.

The *New Nation* recently printed an abstract of the annual speech of President Davis, of the board of manufacturers and employers in California, in which he congratulated the association that by united effort the employees of the state had beaten the trade unions in all the contests of the year. The employers, upon the other hand, are at loggerheads with the railroad companies. "The same body of men," writes Sophie E. Carlton in a letter printed in a California paper, "under the name of Manufacturers' and Employers' Association, affirm a certain principle, which they immediately proceed to deny, under the name of Traffic Association. In other words, the Traffic association bears the same relation to the railroad corporation that the trades unions bear to the Manufacturers' association. The objects, the ends, the means, are identical. As manufacturers, they claim the right to clutch the throats of the producers of their goods; as traffickers they deny the right of the transporters of the same to clutch their own throat. For the employer to tell the employee that if his conditions do not suit him he is at liberty to quit work, when to quit work means starvation, when work is no longer to be had on better terms, is precisely the same as for the railroad company to tell him that if he does not like the company's rates of transportation for his goods he is at liberty to carry them on his back or to leave them in his store. The railroad company, by combination with other railroad companies, and with shipping companies, has obtained the same control of competitive points over trade that Mr. Davis congratulates his fellow merchants of the Employers' association on having obtained over the employees' unions. One would think that such an object lesson as the railroad would have sufficed to give the merchants, whether as individuals or associates, a keener appreciation of interdependence, and a finer conception of equitable reciprocity. But the lesson will have to be learned, at what cost will be largely for the corporation and for the association to determine."—*New Nation*, October 22.

It Is Not So.

Since the suspension of the *New Forum*, of which W. S. Morgan was managing editor, it has been currently reported that the *National Reformer* has gone down with the *New Forum*. This is not true. While the failure of the *New Forum* was a heavy blow on both Mr. Morgan and the *National Reformer*, which he owns, the *Reformer* is out for October, bright and sparkling as ever, and we have the assurance of Mr. Morgan that it will be issued regularly and promptly in the future. There is no better, brighter, purer paper than the *National Reformer*, and we only wonder

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